MARVEL COMICS
THE PUNISHER 2099
27 APR
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE RETURN OF BLUE MAX
DIRECT EDITION
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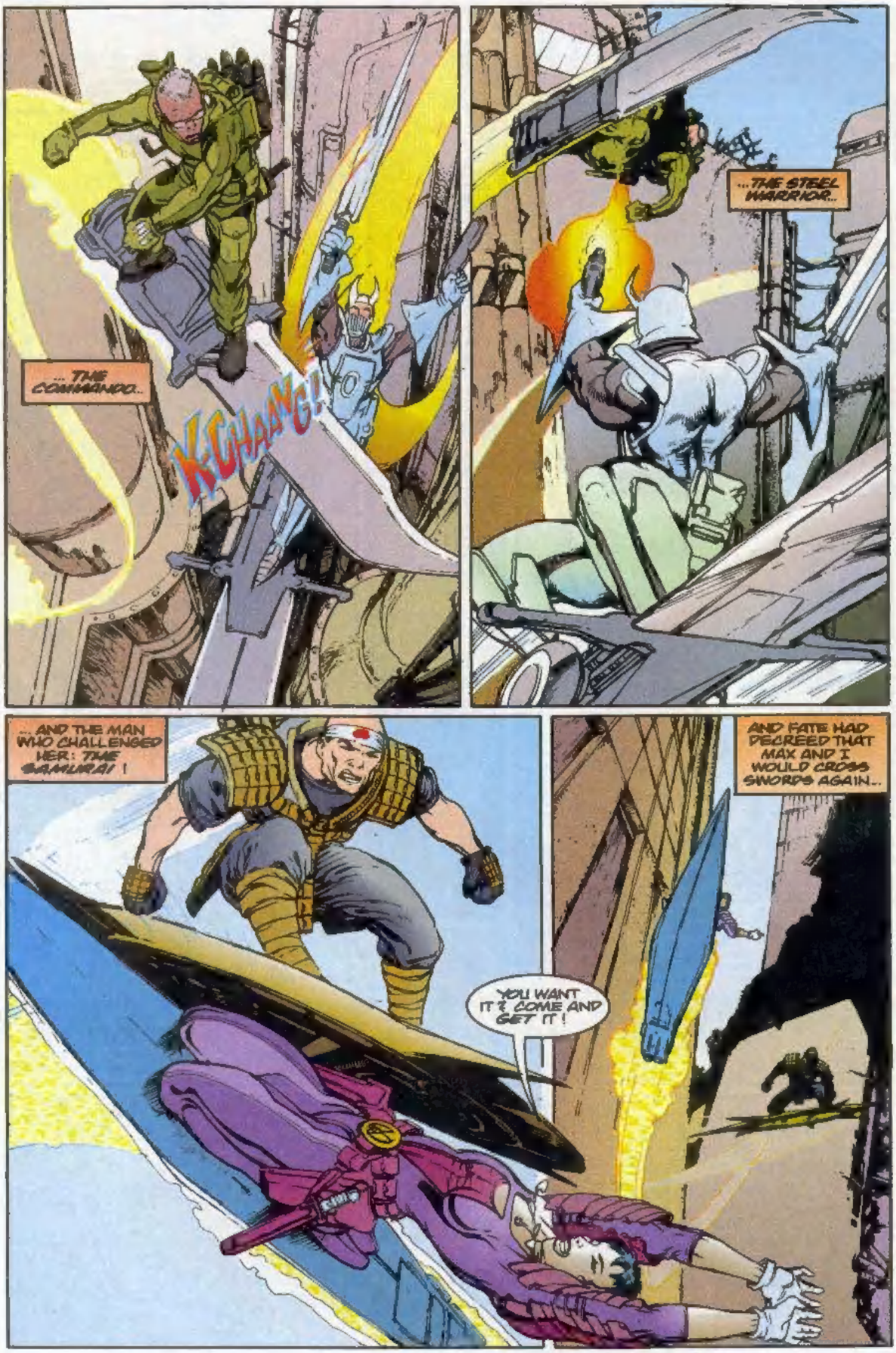
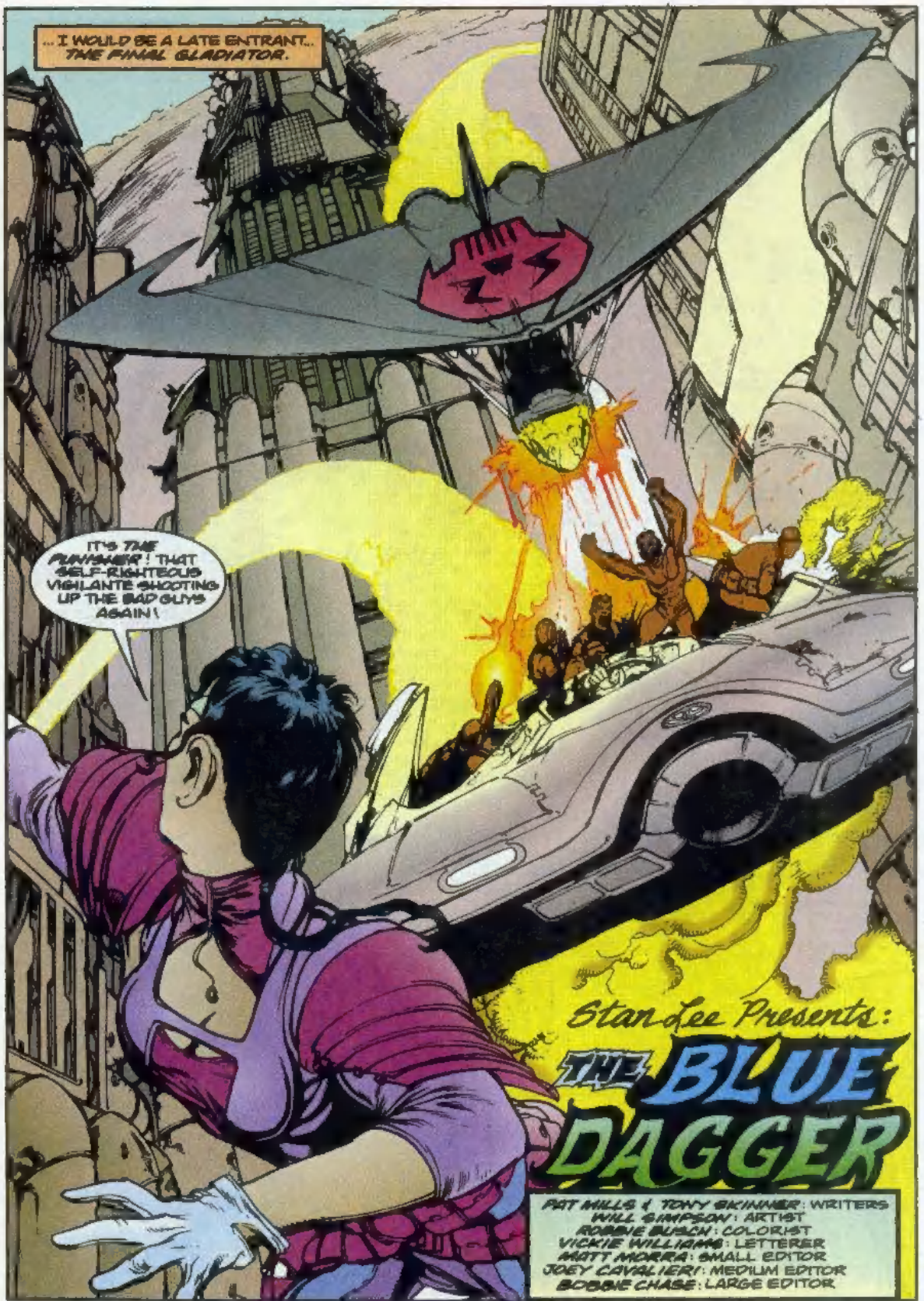
I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED SHE'D BE BACK... PEOPLE LIKE BLUE MAX DON'T DIE WHEN YOU THINK THEY'RE DEAD.
PEOPLE LIKE HER COME BACK LIKE A BAD SMELL.
NOBODY COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT FALL FROM THE TOWER BUILDING... SO I GUESS SHE DIDN'T HIT THE STREET...
...SHE MADE A COMEBACK INSTEAD.
SEEMS SOMEONE HAD CHALLENGED HER FOR THE BLUE DAGGER... THAT FLASHY SKY-BLADE SHE RIDES...
THE PRIZE IN AN ILLEGAL AIR GLADIATOR CHAMPIONSHIP.
AAAAGH!
HAH! SHOULD HAVE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK, BULL... THAT STACK ERUPTS EVERY FIFTEEN SECONDS, SUCKER!
AND SO THE WHOLE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE BEGAN AGAIN.
THEY CAME FROM ALL OVER THE AMERICAN CONTINENT...


... THE COMMANDO..
K-CHAANG!
...THE STEEL WARRIOR..
... AND THE MAN WHO CHALLENGED HER: THE SAMURAI !
AND FATE HAD DECREED THAT MAX AND I WOULD CROSS SWORDS AGAIN..
YOU WANT IT ? COME AND GET IT !


...I WOULD BE A LATE ENTRANT... THE FINAL GLADIATOR.
IT'S THE PUNISHER! THAT SELF-RIGHTEOUS VIGILANTE SHOOTING UP THE BAD GUYS AGAIN!
Stan Lee Presents:
THE BLUE DAGGER
PAT MILLS & TONY SKINNER: WRITERS
WILL SIMPSON: ARTIST
ROBBIE BUSCH: COLORIST
VICKIE WILLIAMS: LETTERER
MATT MORRA: SMALL EDITOR
JOEY CAVALIERI: MEDIUM EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE: LARGE EDITOR

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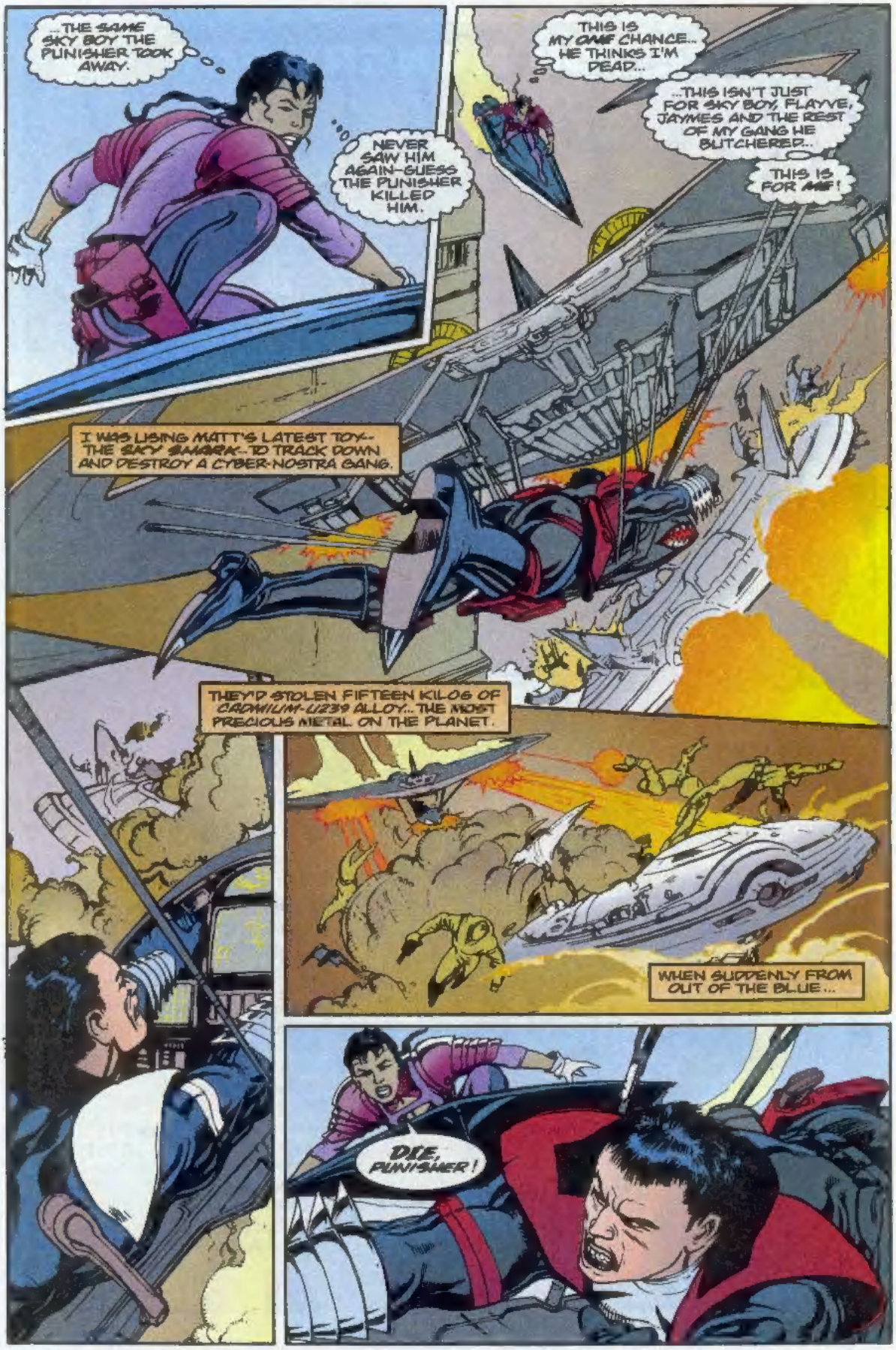
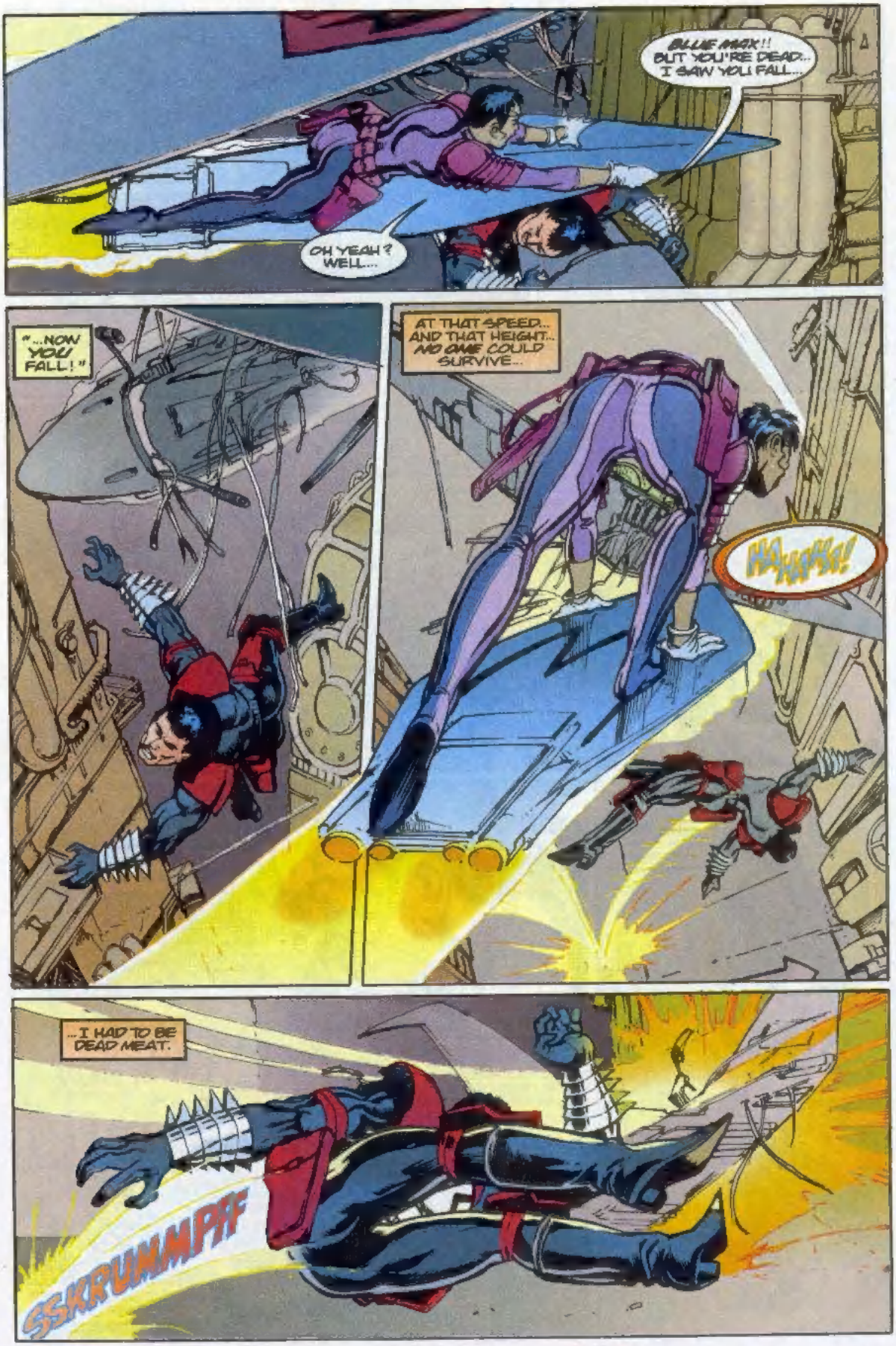
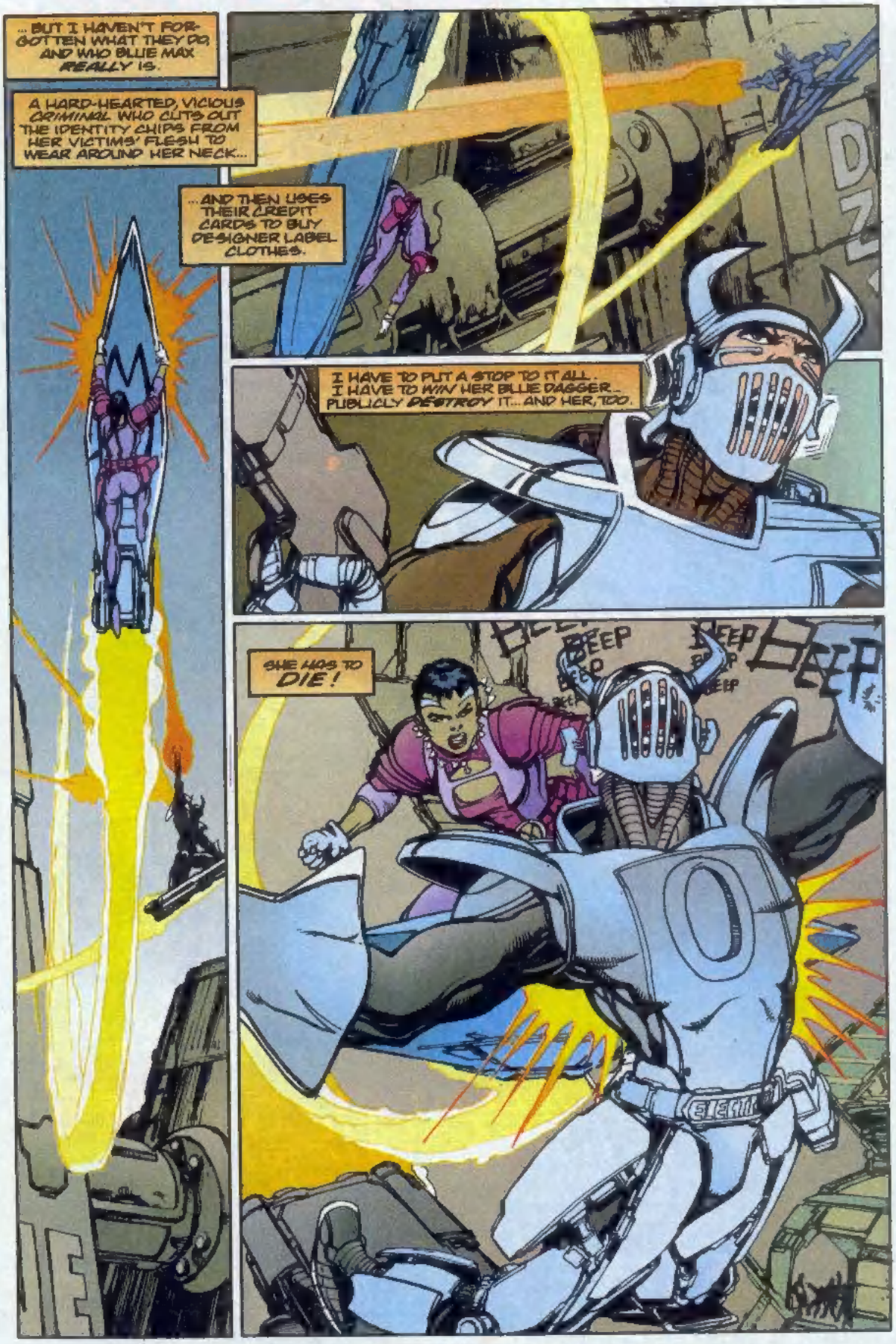
THE PUNISHER THOUGHT I WAS DEAD! AND SO DID I.
HE HAD ME AT HIS MERCY...
...HE WAS ABOUT TO PULL THE TRIGGER...
ENOUGH TALK... TIME TO DIE, MAXINE.
...BUT I LET GO... NOBODY TAKES MY LIFE BUT ME!
SEE PUNISHER 2099 #14.
NO WAY, HERO... NOBODY EVER GAVE ME ANYTHING...YOU AIN'T GONNA GIVE ME...
...DEATH!
BUT "BACY BOY" SAW ME FALL... SWOOPED DOWN AND CAUGHT ME...


...THE SAME SKY BOY THE PUNISHER TOOK AWAY.
NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN--GUESS THE PUNISHER KILLED HIM.
THIS IS MY ONE CHANCE... HE THINKS I'M DEAD...
...THIS ISN'T JUST FOR SKY BOY, FLAYVE, JAYMES AND THE REST OF MY GANG HE BUTCHERED...
THIS IS FOR ME!
I WAS USING MATT'S LATEST TOY-- THE SKY SAMURAI--TO TRACK DOWN AND DESTROY A CYBER-NOSTRA GANG.
THEY'D STOLEN FIFTEEN KILOS OF CADMIUM-U239 ALLOY... THE MOST PRECIOUS METAL ON THE PLANET.
WHEN SUDDENLY FROM OUT OF THE BLUE...
DIE, PUNISHER!


BLUE MAX!! BUT YOU'RE DEAD... I SAW YOU FALL...
OH YEAH? WELL...
"...NOW YOU FALL!"
AT THAT SPEED... AND THAT HEIGHT... NO ONE COULD SURVIVE...
HAHAHA!
...I HAD TO BE DEAD MEAT.
SSKRUHMPH!

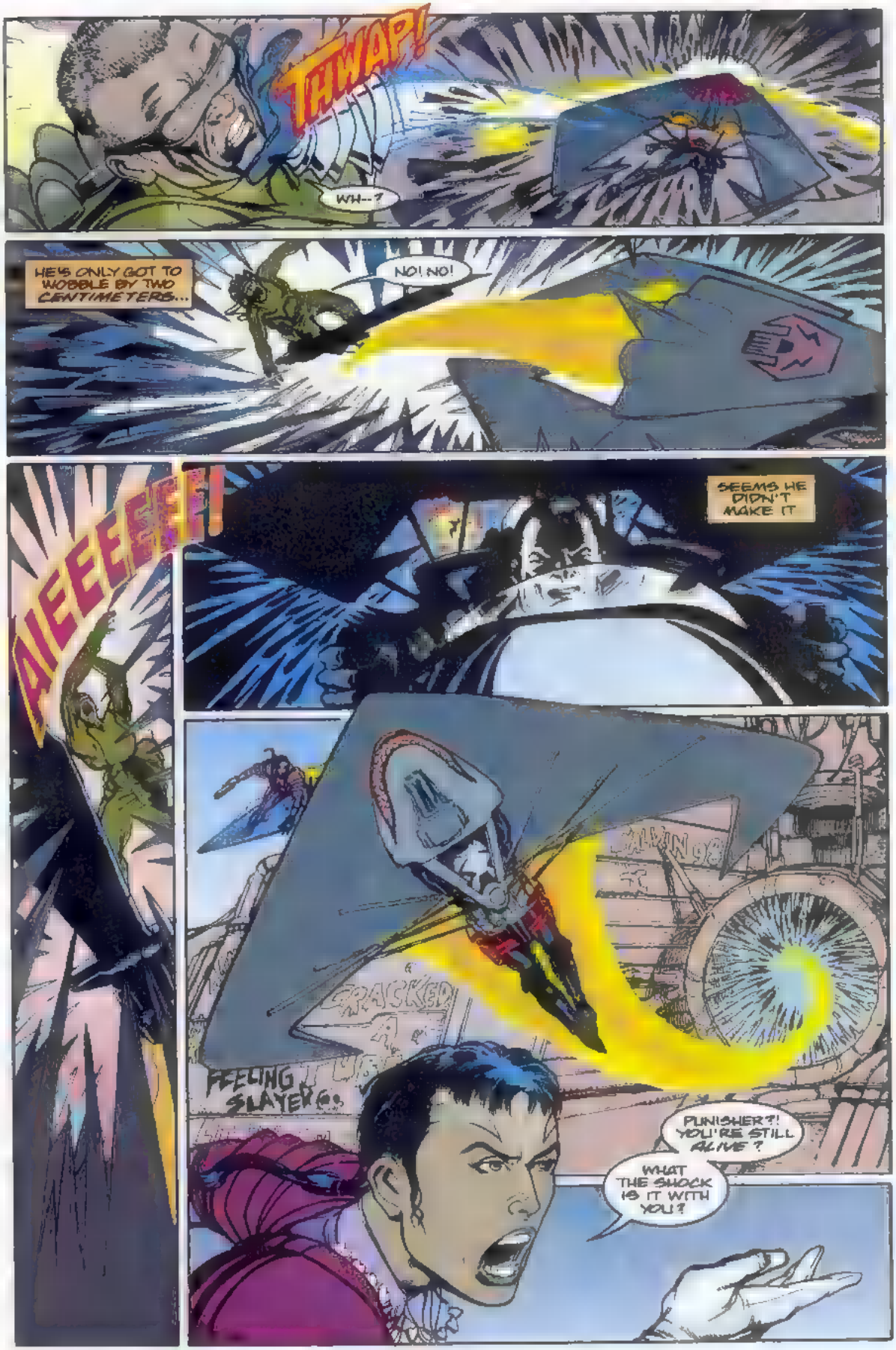
WOW! I JUST OFFED THE PUNISHER! I LOST FIFTEEN POINTS LEAVING THE CHAMPIONSHIP... BUT IT WAS WORTH IT!
NO PARKING
IF I'D BEEN A MEMBER OF HER GANG--SOME UNPROTECTED STREET KID-- MY HANDS WOULD HAVE BEEN GROUND TO STUMPS... BONES SMASHED... FLESH RIPPED FROM MY BODY...
...BUT, SEEING AS MY COSTUME'S ARMORED-- I'M JUST BRUISED.
AND REALLY TICKED OFF!
I GO BACK TO MY BASE AND DO SOME CHECKING. I DISCOVER THROUGH THE "STREET MEDIA NETWORK" ABOUT THE CHAMPIONSHIP...
NY GLADIATOR'S FINAL BE THERE!
...NOW I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HER!

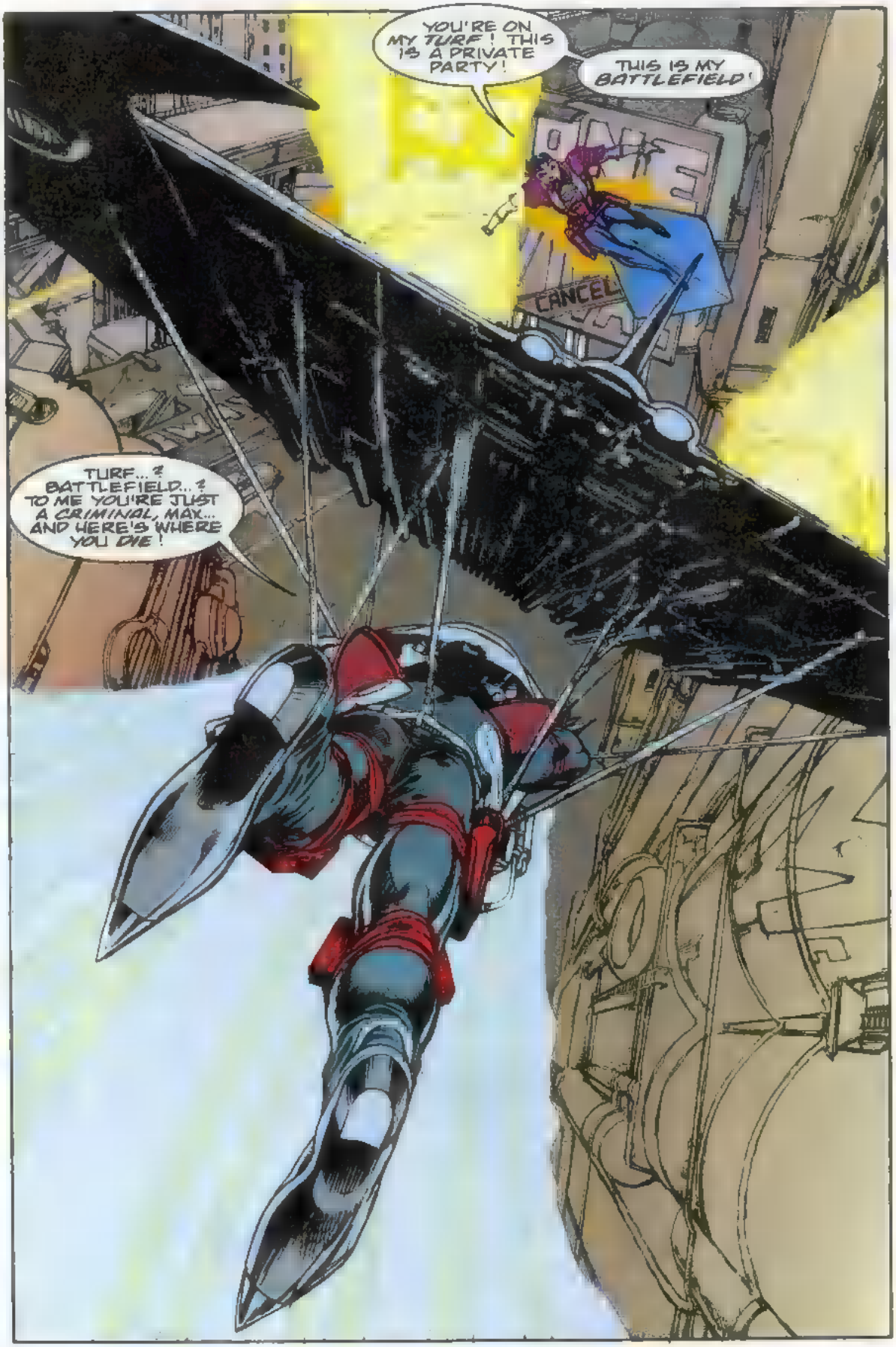
MATT DID A GOOD JOB ON THE SKYSHARK... I'LL BE THERE FOR THE FINALS.
THE ACTUAL LOCATION IS A CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET...
...BUT BY TRACKING ATMOSPHERIC INFRA-RED IRREGULARITIES AND HYDROCARBON TRACES FROM THEIR ILLEGAL JETS, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO GET A FIX ON THE EVENT.
IF I JUST FLY IN AND EXECUTE HER, I'LL FACE EVERYONE WITH A GUN IN THE CROWD..
...ONLY ONE THING FOR IT-- I HAVE TO JOIN IN.. BEAT THEM AT THEIR OWN GAME.. AND TAKE HER OUT FAIR AND SQUARE.
THEY GLAMORIZE CRIME. HUNDREDS OF KIDS LEAVE HOME AND JOIN THE BLADE GANGS... DRAWN IN BY THE ROMANTIC SKY PIRATE IMAGE...

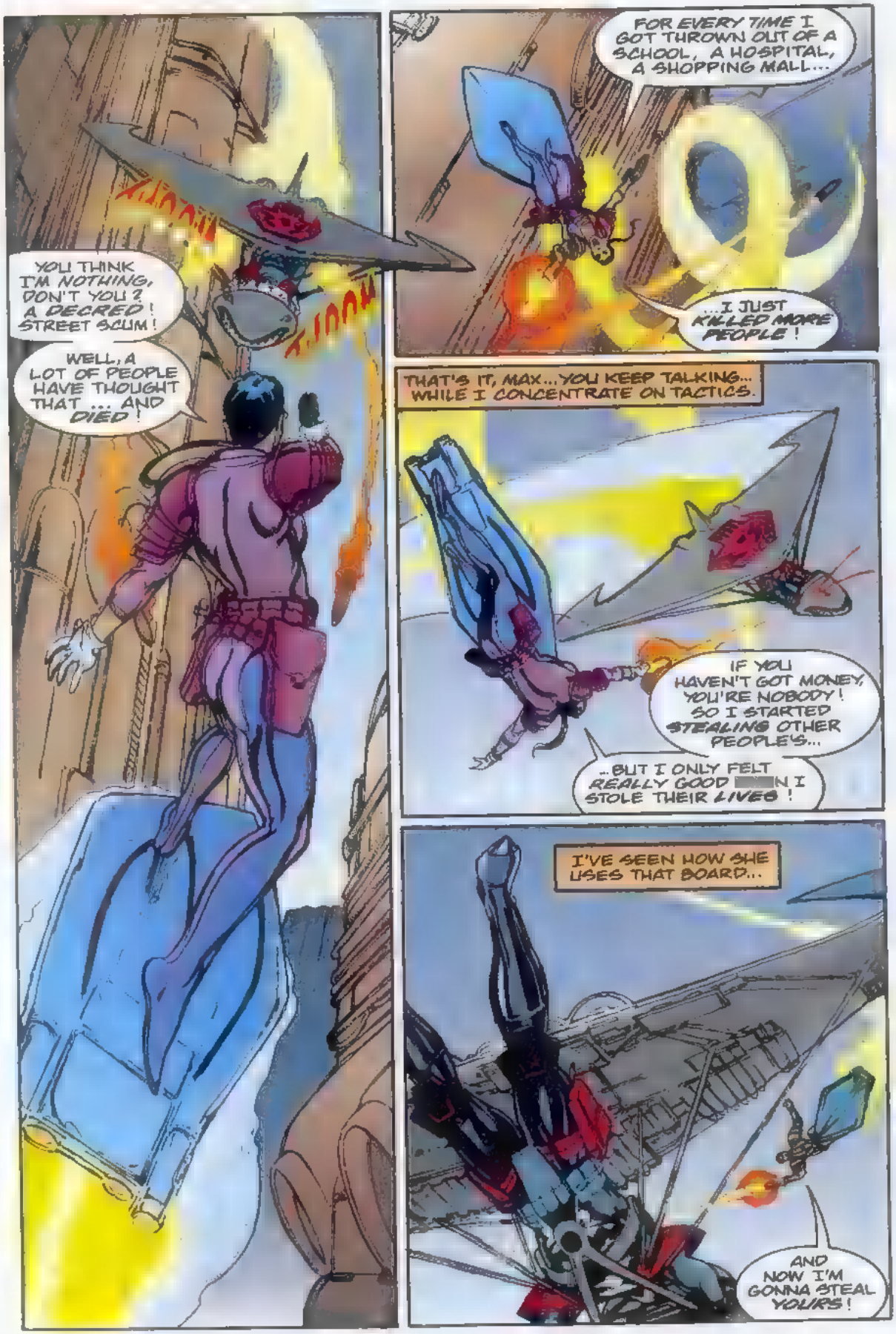

...BUT I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN WHAT THEY DO AND WHO BLUE MAX REALLY IS.
A HARD-HEARTED, VICIOUS CRIMINAL WHO CUTS OUT THE IDENTITY CHIPS FROM HER VICTIMS' FLESH TO WEAR AROUND HER NECK...
...AND THEN USES THEIR CREDIT CARDS TO BUY DESIGNER LABEL CLOTHES.
I HAVE TO PUT A STOP TO IT ALL. I HAVE TO WIN HER BLUE DAGGER... PUBLICLY DESTROY IT... AND HER, TOO.
SHE HAS TO DIE!
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

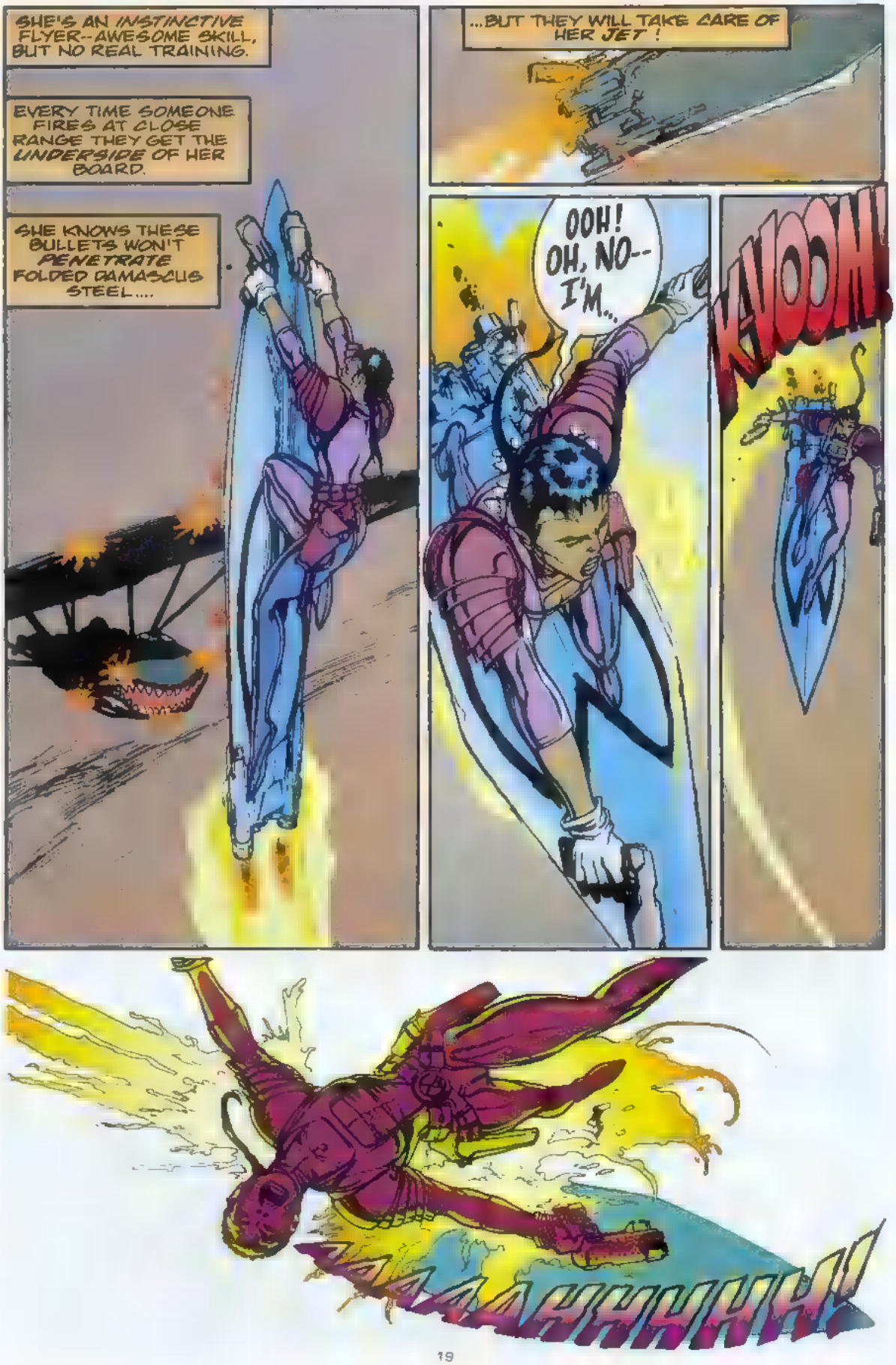
IT WILL DISCREDIT THE WHOLE SKYBOARD CULTURE.. BY KILLING HER, IT'S TEN KIDS I WON'T HAVE TO KILL.
MY DEFENSE COMPUTER'S SCANNED THE COURSE AND LOCATED THE OBSTACLES..
...AHEAD IS 'SNIPER CORRIDOR'.
...SNIPERS LEANING OUT OF EVERY WINDOW ARMED WITH STOLEN POLICE LASER RIFLES.
YAY! LOOK, HIGGY--THE PUNISHER'S IN THE TOURNEY!
YOU MEAN, HE WAS... I GOT A BEAD ON HIM!
HIGH-DENSITY "SILVER SMOKE" GRENADES...
...THEY EMIT BILLIONS OF TINY MIRRORED PARTICLES...
...DIFFUSE THE LASERS' COHERENT LIGHT.

BUT I CAN STILL SEE WHERE THE SUCKERS ARE HIDING.
THE SMOKE DOESN'T SEEM TO STOP MY .54 CALIBER BULLETS.
AAGH!
THE COMMANDO! FLYING A FIGHTING DAGGER, WITH AN OLD HEAT-SEEKING GUIDANCE SYSTEM STUCK ON THE FRONT.
MY SENSORS SAY HE'S LOCKED ONTO ME.
HE KNOWS I CAN'T SWERVE... 'CAUSE WE'RE BOTH HEADED FOR THE "TUNNEL OF SPIKES"--A CENTIMETER OUT AND YOU'RE SHREDDED...
...SO HE'S TAKING HIS TIME... HE'LL START SHOOTING AS I ENTER.
I CAN FEEL THE SIGHTS ON MY BACK... BUT IF I CAN'T DEVIATE FROM COURSE, NEITHER CAN HE.

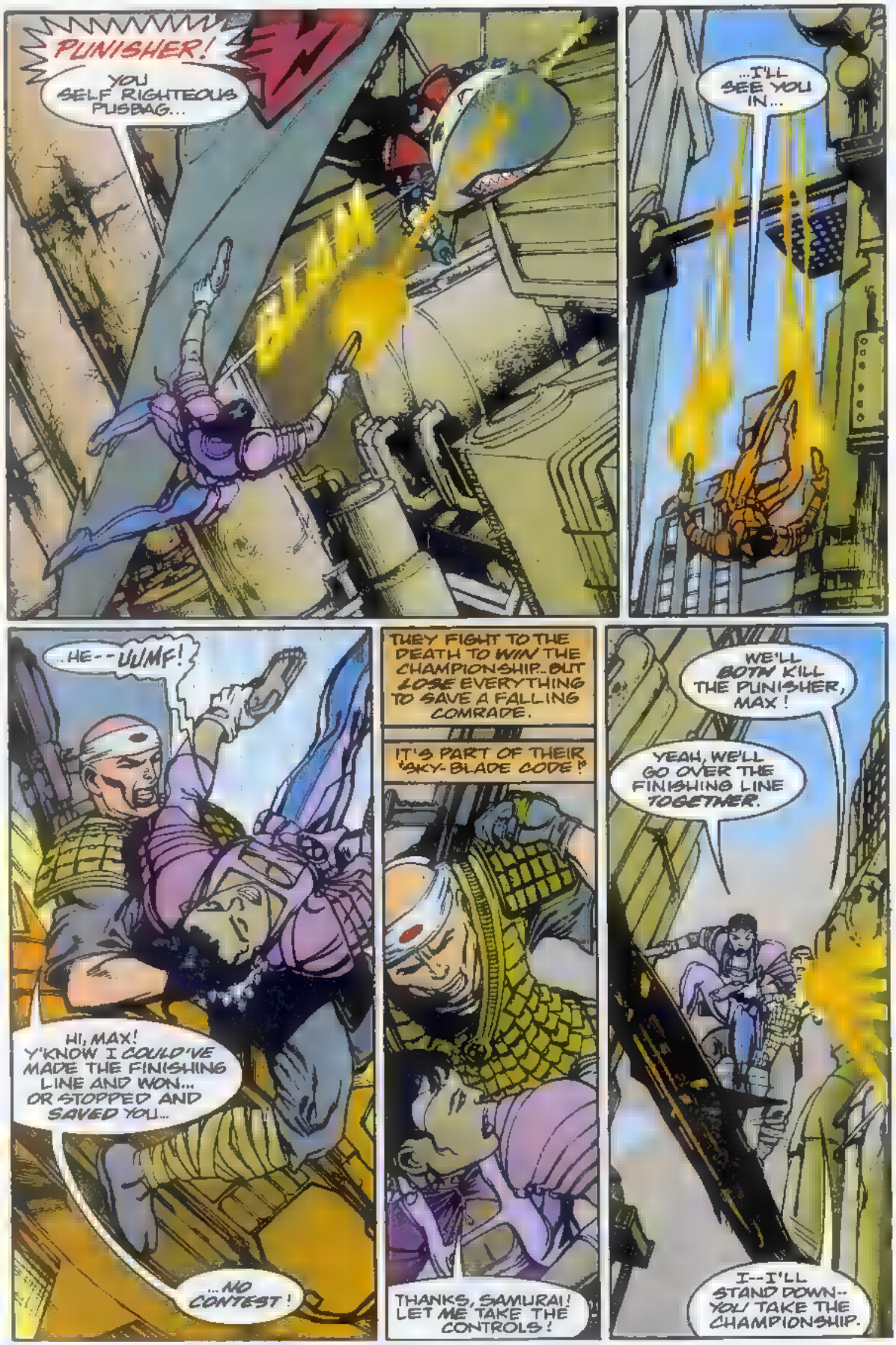

THWAP!
WH--?
HE'S ONLY GOT TO WOBBLE BY TWO CENTIMETERS...
NO! NO!
AIEEEEE!!
SEEMS HE DIDN'T MAKE IT
CRACKED
FEELING SLAYER
PUNISHER?! YOU'RE STILL ALIVE?
WHAT THE SHOCK IS IT WITH YOU?


YOU'RE ON MY TURF! THIS IS A PRIVATE PARTY!
THIS IS MY BATTLEFIELD!
CANCEL
TURF...? BATTLEFIELD..? TO ME YOU'RE JUST A CRIMINAL, MAX... AND HERE'S WHERE YOU DIE!


YOU THINK I'M NOTHING, DON'T YOU? A DECRED! STREET SCUM!
WELL, A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE THOUGHT THAT ... AND DIED!
FOR EVERY TIME I GOT THROWN OUT OF A SCHOOL, A HOSPITAL, A SHOPPING MALL...
...I JUST KILLED MORE PEOPLE!
THAT'S IT, MAX...YOU KEEP TALKING... WHILE I CONCENTRATE ON TACTICS.
IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT MONEY, YOU'RE NOBODY! SO I STARTED STEALING OTHER PEOPLE'S...
...BUT I ONLY FELT REALLY GOOD [redacted]N I STOLE THEIR LIVES!
I'VE SEEN HOW SHE USES THAT BOARD...
AND NOW I'M GONNA STEAL YOURS!


SHE'S AN INSTINCTIVE FLYER--AWESOME SKILL, BUT NO REAL TRAINING.
EVERY TIME SOMEONE FIRES AT CLOSE RANGE THEY GET THE UNDERSIDE OF HER BOARD.
SHE KNOWS THESE BULLETS WON'T PENETRATE FOLDED DAMASCUS STEEL....
...BUT THEY WILL TAKE CARE OF HER JET!
OOH! OH, NO-- I'M...
KA-VOOH!
AAHHHHH!

GOOD--THAT'S THE END OF THE BLUE DAGGER!
NOW WHERE DID SHE FALL?
FUNNY.. I DON'T SEE HER.
SURFS UP.
PUNK ROCK LOVE
IMPACT ACCUMULATORS OVER-LOADING... IF SHE FIRES ANOTHER BURST IT WILL PENETRATE MY SUIT.
OKAY, SUCKER.. NOW WE BOTH GO DOWN!
IF SHE FIRES.


PUNISHER!
YOU SELF RIGHTEOUS PUSBAG...
...I'LL SEE YOU IN...
...HE--UUMF!
HI, MAX! Y'KNOW I COULD'VE MADE THE FINISHING LINE AND WON... OR STOPPED AND SAVED YOU...
...NO CONTEST!
THEY FIGHT TO THE DEATH TO WIN THE CHAMPIONSHIP..BUT LOSE EVERYTHING TO SAVE A FALLING COMRADE.
IT'S PART OF THEIR "SKY-BLADE CODE!"
THANKS, SAMURAI! LET ME TAKE THE CONTROLS!
WE'LL BOTH KILL THE PUNISHER, MAX!
YEAH, WE'LL GO OVER THE FINISHING LINE TOGETHER.
I--I'LL STAND DOWN-- YOU TAKE THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

CRAZY KIDS. MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, I ADMIRE THEIR CODE OF HONOR...
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
...BUT IT ISN'T GOING TO STOP ME. THEY'RE BOTH CRIMINALS -- AND WILL KEEP KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE UNLESS I [redacted] THEM OUT.
AAGHHH!
SAMURAI!

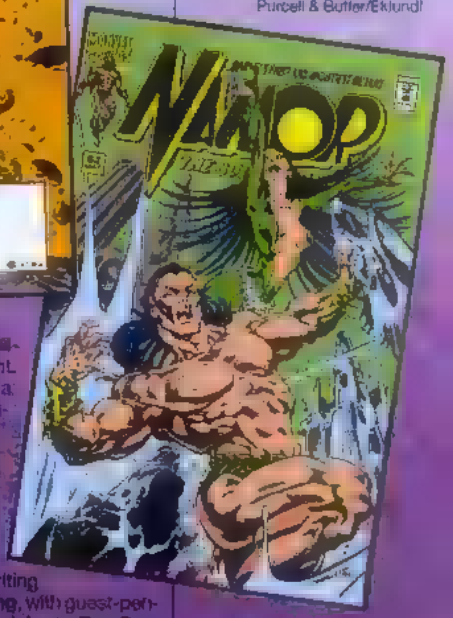
MARVEL COMICS

ITEM! As the super-soldier serum deterioration storyline continues in CAPTAIN AMERICA, this may be the twilight's last gleaming for the shield-slinging Avenger! In issue #439, Cap, sporting his ultra-cool battle armor, continues his efforts to wrap up the loose ends of his life before his crime-fighting career comes to an untimely end. Writer **Mark Gruenwald** promised that this issue will resolve the mystery of the Super-Patriot and Dead Ringer. "We'll find out who they are, and how they know who they know," Mark remarked. Mark also had some good words for the remarkable art of **Dave Hoover**. "He's doing the most dynamic work of his career. The book has never looked more star-spangled!"

ITEM! The Fantastic Force meets the Fantastic Four for the very first time in the pages of FANTASTIC FORCE #7, brought to you by co-writers **Tom Brevoort** and **Mike Kanterovich**, with art by **Dante Bastianoni** and **Ralph Cabera**. The issue is the third part of the "Watcher's Lie" epic, currently running in both FF mags, and it concludes in FANTASTIC FOUR #400! FAN/FOR (as we call it around the Bullpen) features the Force heading to Taiven-[illegible] for a confrontation with Franklin's grandfather, Nathan Richards! But by the end of the issue, the Force may wind up joining forces with their fantastic [illegible]. Co-writer Tom B. [illegible] that if you are a regular reader of the FOUR but not the FORCE, this issue is a must-buy! Vowed Tom, "If you don't read this issue, you're going to miss stuff!" Tom praised the FAN/FOR art team, observing, "They're getting better every issue!" Tom swears that everything he told us about the issue is true. He concluded, "The story is called 'Watcher's Lie,' not Tom Brevoort's lie!"

ITEM! Issue #62 marks both an ending and a beginning for NAMOR THE SUB-MARINER! It's the last issue of the series, but the action which unfolds within will rock the Marvel Universe for months to come! The story is a prelude to the blockbuster "Atlantis Rising" crossover which begins next month, and runs through the pages of FANTASTIC FOUR, WARLOCK, and FANTASTIC FORCE! It begins when the villainous Vivian Morgan (who is she, really?) manipulates Triton into battling Namor. According to writer **Glenn Herdling**, "She tricks Triton into thinking she's going to save the Azores islands." This results in a subsea slugfest the likes of which you've never seen before! Writer Glenn Herdling lamented the deep-sixing of NAMOR, commenting, "I will miss writing NAMOR. I learned more about the ocean than I thought I'd ever know!" Glenn also hopes to work again with NAMOR artist **Geof Isherwood**, about whom he said, "He improved tremendously with every issue ... with every page!"

ITEM! Iron Man has a long-awaited rematch with Black Brigade in the pages of FORCE WORKS #11. Assistant editor **Mike Marts** revealed, "The Force Works team ventures back to the country of Slorenia (from [illegible] #5), where they find that all is not right. The Slorenians have launched a super-soldier program which is creating monsters called Targoths!" This brings the Workers into conflict with Black Brigade, who is the national champion of Slorenia. The story spins off from events in WAR MACHINE #14, on sale in two weeks! FORCE [illegible] #11 is created by that transcontinental writing duo, **Dan Abnett** and **Andy Lanning**, with guest-penciler **Jim Calafiore** inked by regular ink-guy **Ray Garcia**. Mike described Jim's pencils as "really good, super-looking stuff," and summed up FW #11 as "an action-packed espionage tale!"



STILL ON SALE

- **FANTASTIC FOUR #399:** Watch out for the shocking secret of the **Watchers**! By DeFalco/Ryan/Bulanadi!
- **IRON MAN #315:** Tony Stark opens a plant in the USSR — and **Titanium Man** wants to shut it down! By Kaminski/Morgan!
- **NICK FURY/CAPTAIN AMERICA #1:** A Russian defector is stalked by the mysterious **Agent Orange**! By Chaykin & Schwartz/Currie/Palmer!
- **SILVER SURFER #103:** Meet the Silver Surfer Death Squad! Guess what they want! By Greenberg/Morgan/Mitchell!
- **THOR #485:** It's a thrilling throw-down as the **Thing** throttles **Thor**! By Thomas/Wyman/DeCarlo!
- **THUNDERSTRIKE #19:** Thunderstrike sells out on a TV home shopping network! By DeFalco/ Frenz/Milgrom!
- AVENGERS #385: The **Red Skull** strikes! By Harras/Deodato/Palmer!
- **MARVEL ACTION HOUR: FANTASTIC FOUR #6:** Lock your doors! An armada of Skrulls is heading to Earth! By Cavalieri/Alcatena!
- **MARVEL ACTION HOUR: IRON MAN** [redacted] The origin of the Mandarin! Plus: Fin Fang Foom! By Fein/Williams/Nyberg!
- [redacted] & **THE INFINITY WATCH #39: Domitian** crashes Firelord's funeral! By Arcudi/Oliffe/Williams!
- **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #59:** The Silver Surfer of the 31st Century is dying! By Gallagher/West/Montano!
- **NICK FURY/ BLACK WIDOW: DEATH DUTY #1:** 48-page graphic novel! Nick and Natasha — in the shadow of the **Night Raven**! By Ridout/Adlard!
- **SILVER SABLE #35:** Together again for the last time! Silver Sable and Lil' Stevie! By Wright/Purcell & Butler/Eklund!
- **WAR MACHINE #13:** The **Rush Club** [illegible] reunion! War Machine! By Abnett/Chlystek!

SAMURAI [redacted] WARRIOR! FIERCE! [redacted]AVE! HONORABLE!
AND THE PUNISHER CUT HIM DOWN AS THOUGH HE COUNTED FOR NOTHING!
I CAN SEE WHAT YOU'RE DOING... YOU INTEND TO WIN THE GAME...
...DISCREDIT WHAT WE STAND FOR!
THE BIG END!
YEAH...EVEN IF WE DRAW--KIDS WON'T SEE YOU AS SO COOL IF YOU SHARE THE TITLE WITH THE PUNISHER!
THEY WILL IF YOU CROSS THE LINE AS A CORPSE!

I'VE GOT TO WIN... NOT JUST FOR ME... BUT FOR SAMURAI...
READY
THE EYE
ALLIGATOR
ZOO
TOWN
..FOR ALL THE YOUNG BLADES!
SHE'S DONE IT!
MAX! MAX! BLUE MAX!
THE PUNISHER ON A POWER GLIDER? HE ALMOST WON- THE PUNISHER, F'SHOCKS SAKE!
YEAH, WHAT'LL THE CHAMPIONSHIP BE NEXT YEAR...? SPONSORED BY THE PUBLIC EYE? I'M OUTTA THIS WHOLE SCENE!
WOW! WHAT A FLYER!
CLOSE SECOND, MAN!
BET YOU GET IT NEXT YEAR!

I LOVED THAT THING WITH THE GLOVE..THE WAY YOU WIPED THE COMMANDO DOWN THE "TUBE O' SPIKES..."
AND THE SNIPERS, TOO! COOL! THOUGH I MUST SAY--THE HEAVY USE OF HI-TECH IS...
...NOT REALLY IN THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME--
THWAK!
AAGHH!
IT'S NOT A GAME! IT WAS NEVER A GAME!
PITY ABOUT YOUR BOARD, MAX... WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER ONE MADE.
NO, SLASHER... THERE'LL NEVER BE ANOTHER LIKE THE BLUE DAGGER.
MAX! IT'S OVER!
HEY, MAN--YOU CAN'T--!
SHUT UP!

DO WHAT YOU LIKE, PUNISHER...I'VE WON.
NOTHING WILL PUT ME OFF THIS TIME, MAX...I WAS SOFT ON YOU BEFORE...
...THIS TIME THE KILLER DIES!
THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL US ALL, PUNISHER!
SHE'S WON, SHE WALKS, YOU GONNA GUN US ALL DOWN, MAN?
GET OUT OF MY WAY! I'M WARNING YOU!
I'M NOT ABOUT TO SHOOT A WHOLE LOAD OF INNOCENT KIDS JUST TO GET MY TARGET...
...THAT'S WHAT MAXIME WOULD DO...AND AT THE END OF THE DAY I'M NOT LIKE HER.
BUT NEXT TIME— NO MORE GAMES— BLUE MAX DIES!

TARGET PRACTICE

Matthew Morra, Associate Editor · Joey Cavalieri, Group Editor

c/o Marvel Comics · 387 Park Avenue South · New York, New York 10016

All letters for publication must include your name and address, although we will gladly withhold that info upon request.

Off With His Head

Grateful applause from the cheering throng...a fireworks display spelling my name in English and Latverian...a party with dancing and carousing in the streets! What a grand and glorious day for one and all!

At least...that is what I am expecting when I, Emperor Doom the First, reach your shores next month! You had better start saving your sadly-worn shekels and pathetic piasters now, as I expect a royal reception upon my arrival!

Be there or be liquidated!

Dear *Target Practice*,

Just got back from my friendly neighborhood comic shop where I bought my weekly haul of comics. Of course, PUNISHER 2099 #22 was right on top of the pile. What an issue! You start off with this great new gang of baddies, the Moonchildren, then you add the long awaited return of Matt Axel, give the Punisher a new holographic face mask, tell us about Jake's son, Dean, take us on a guided tour through a computer's defense system and finish with the Punisher about to kill his own son!

Rest assured that next issue will also be at the top of next month's pile. Until the Punisher fights for prisoner's rights, make mine MARVEL 2099.

Jan Klonson
1716 W. Ames
Fredenc, MI 49733

And you can rest assured that we'll always do our best to keep THE PUNISHER 2099 on your must-have list!

Dear Matt,

A few weeks back, I heard you say on the Marvel Fan Phone, "How can the Punisher, who's a pretty young guy, have a full-grown son? Read issue #22 and find out." Well, I did read #22 and still didn't find out! What's the deal?

Frank Laveccia
71 Abergast Ct.
Leesburg, AL 35983

Dean Gallows was only 18 years old when his body was mutated by the trans-mat beam. The mutation made him bigger, stronger and look more like his father. Sorry if we didn't make that clear in the story.

Hi *Target Practice*,

Mills, Skinner and Coleby have done it again. Issue #22 was awesome! Thanks so much for bringing back Matt Axel! His absence was severely felt. The Punisher needs him as a positive influence in his life. Matt helps keep him sane. Remember back when Jake lost his mind and developed split personalities? It was Matt who helped bring him back. Don't let him go again.

I was also glad to see the new holographic skull mask. I'd been wondering how the Punisher was able to maintain his anonymity without some kind of mask. Even though his costume has built-in electronic scramblers to prevent his face from being seen on a video monitor, people could still see it in person. And since he's a Public Eye cop by day, a fellow cop was bound to recognize him. Thanks for a very creative and visually stunning explanation.

Speaking of visual, artist Simon Coleby keeps on getting better. His depiction of the Moonchildren was incredible; these guys really looked like they were from the moon! His scenes of Hotwire riding through the computer's security system were nothing less than breathtaking. Kudos on the coloring also, Ian Laughlin's muted colors complement Simon's moody pencils perfectly.

If Hotwire was only traveling in cyberspace, how come he was so worried about being hurt while fighting the bank's security program?

Mikey Klisto
3433 River Run Rd., #2
Las Vegas, NV 89107

That's because Hotwire wasn't merely an icon in cyberspace. He was *physically* inside the computer. Although the trans-mat beam gave him the ability to turn himself into pure energy, if his energized form was damaged he could still die.

Dear *Target Practice*,

I've been a fan of PUNISHER 2099 ever since issue #1. I think it's one of the best comics Marvel puts out. In issue #22, you introduced the "Moonchildren," a gang of kids from the Moon. This brings up something I've wondered about for a long time. Since it's the future, technology must've advanced to the point where there are colonies in outer space; certainly on the Moon and probably on other planets as well. Space travel itself would be as common as plane travel is today. This also opens up lots of possibilities for aliens to appear in this book. We've already seen the Fearmaster's "Star Friends"; surely there must be more aliens out there. In fact, the Punisher could take off into outer space to fight on other planets. Just think of all the intergalactic scum out there that need punishment!

Roger Myers
(Address withheld by request)

NEXT ISSUE

Jake Gallows gets a promotion...and wait'll you see who his new boss is! Does this mean Jake's becoming a desk jockey? Like, no way...the Public Eye is officially disbanded, so he's now the head of SHIELD, answerable *only* to the President of the United States...DOOM!

Also...a NEW PUNISHER 2099! Have we given you enough reasons yet to hound the stands for our next episode? Heh?

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